Vol. 8 No. 7

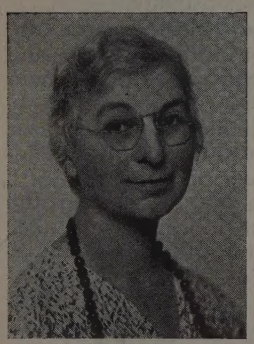
NATIONAL CONGRESS BULLETIN

MARCH
1941

PUBLISHED BY THE NATIONAL CONGRESS OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

PLEASE PASS ON TO

Dear Local President:



This National Congress of Parents and Teachers is not a group apart, in which you are interested only to the extent of paying dues, but it is a group of which you are participating members. It is like a great community whose families are the various state congresses.

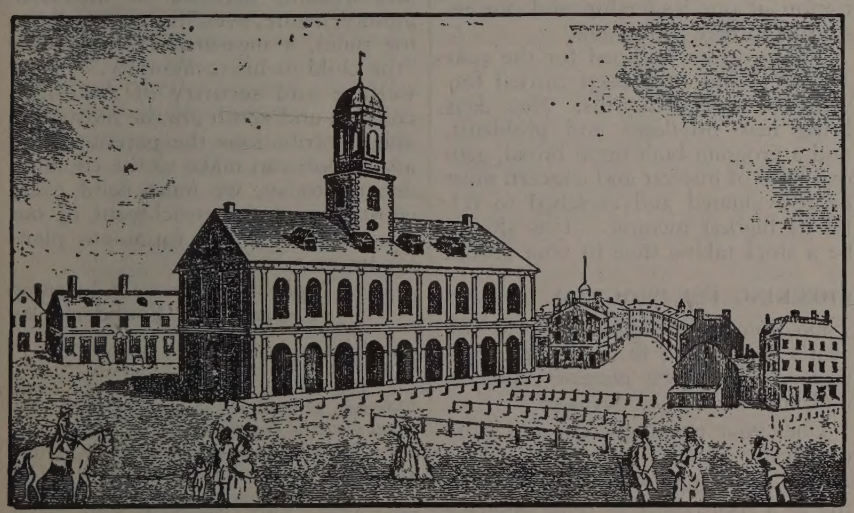
Established forty-four years ago, it has grown gradually but not uniformly, each "family" building its house according to its needs. The National Congress is a democratic community in which every family enjoys the right to be individual, though there is a liberal exchange of patterns of living and recipes for success. Each group has a part in making decisions and choosing leaders who are interested in the welfare of children and youth.

The last of the fifty houses is now occupied, for the Nevada family came into the National Congress in November. Neighbors were there to help them get settled, to acquaint them with the community life, to make them aware of their role in the neighborhood plans.

The continued success of this organization will depend upon the willingness with which you assume your responsibilities as members of one of these families, remembering that these responsibilities rest upon large and small, rich and poor, old and young, according to each family's ability to serve.

Katherine M. Turner

Regional Vice-President
National Congress of Parents and Teachers



FANEUIL HALL, BOSTON, MASS.
Presented to the town of Boston in 1742 by Peter Faneuil for a market place.

CONVENTION PLANS NEARING COMPLETION

MEN and women prominent in the educational and social affairs of America will interpret the Boston Convention theme "Modern Problems in Community Living" in four days of discussion, May 19-22.

One of the features of the Convention will be the New England Town Meeting to be broadcast from Faneuil Hall over NBC on Thursday night, May 22.

Speakers and panel discussants announced so far, include:

Everett R. Clinchy, Director, National Conference of Christians and Jews; Donald DuShane, President, National Education Association; Senora Maria Marchant de Gonzalez-Vera, of Santiago, Chile, exchange fellow under the Convention of Buenos Aires for the Promotion of Inter-American Cultural Relations; Mrs. Sidonie Matsner Gruenberg, Director, Child Study Association of America; Howard Y. McClusky, Assistant Director, American Youth Commission of the American Council on Education; Hon. Paul V. McNutt, Administrator, Federal Security Agency; John K. Norton, Professor of Education, Teachers College, Columbia University; Flora Thurston, Professor of Home Economics Education, School of Education, Cornell University; C. E. Turner, Professor of Biology and Public Health, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

The time for the National Chairmen's Conferences has been announced for Tuesday and Wednesday, May 20 and 21, at 8:30-10:00 a.m. and 3:45-5:15 p.m. each day. A short business session is scheduled for Thursday morning. With the exception of the Vesper Service in King's Chapel, Sunday, May 18, and the meeting in Faneuil Hall, all sessions will be in the Statler Hotel, Convention headquarters.

THE P.T.A. BULLETIN BOARD

Evaluating the Local Unit Program

CONGRESS CONTACTS

A MEETING of the Advisory Committee of the Summer Round-Up of the Children was held in New York City on February 20. Dr. Lillian R. Smith, national chairman, presided.

Among the National Congress officers and chairmen present at the meetings of the Progressive Education Association in Philadelphia, February 19-22, was Mrs. W. R. Cavanaugh, chairman of the committee on Radio, who participated in the panel discussions.

Meetings attended by the national president, Mrs. William Kletzer, during the month of February include the following: the American Social Hygiene Association's annual convention in New York City; the American Association of School Administrators' convention in Atlantic City; the Radio Council on Children's Programs in New York City.

PTA EXHIBIT

The National Congress had a booth at the meeting of the American Association of School Administrators in Atlantic City, where publications of the Congress were displayed. The New Jersey Congress of Parents and Teachers cooperated with the National Congress in this undertaking.

CONGRESS SEALS AVAILABLE

Attractive blue and gold seals in large and small sizes are now available through the state offices.

THE work of the American Red Cross is vividly shown in two new one-reel films just released and ready for showing at no expense except the cost of shipping. The titles of the films: "Footsteps" and "Mobilized for Mercy." For further information write to the American Red Cross Director of Public Relations, 19 East 47th Street, New York.

MRS. WILLIAM KLETZER, National Congress president, in a recent message to her own state said: "Parent-teacher members have enlisted in the service of youth, and through this service are serving America. It is more essential today than ever before to build security and happiness and courage in our people. This is important in any program for common defense. Safeguarding the mental and physical health of our children through the active support of those institutions which foster family life, spiritual growth, education, recreation, and public health is a national service, not only a service for today but defense for the future."

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

What are your local unit, council, and state groups doing *now* for such a timely, broad program? Are you interpreting democracy to your membership? Are you demonstrating its privileges by tolerance, observance of the rights and opinions of others? Are you attempting to understand the present problems and needs, and then joining all forces to answer these needs? This is the process through which our program for common defense may be presented and forwarded in every community. We are a mighty force for thought and action in all that affects the homes and schools of our land. There should be a mobilization of our leadership and our resources to take action *now*.

The program outlined for the year 1940-1941 has now been carried forward for several months. New days bring new privileges and problems, and a program built upon broad, general lines of interest and concern must be re-evaluated and enriched to fulfill its highest mission. This should be a stock-taking time in your group.

CHECKING THE PROGRAM

Do you make adjustments in the year's program to fit changing conditions, and do you present problems and appeals as they develop?

Does your meeting begin and close on time?

Do you confine your business meeting to a short space of time, allowing only matters of general interest to be presented?

Do you provide adequate time on the program for the speaker? Have you an agreement with him as to how long he shall speak?

Do you arrange for open discussion and participation in the program?

Do you permit the hospitality, music, and other committees to take their full share of responsibility?

Do your arrangements for the care of children, for the social hour and refreshments interfere with the main part of the meeting?

Has your membership grown? Has it shown sustained interest, by attendance and participation?

Do you share with the members the responsibility of the arrangements for the meeting and the forwarding of new plans? (A participating membership is an interested and useful membership.)

Do you take into counsel the teaching staff and interested citizens in your community to insure the broadest and wisest type of service?

Do you confer as to your successes and failures and list these for future guidance?

INSURING SECURITY

The home is the first line of defense; the school and the home together train our children and youth to carry on our democratic traditions. These two institutions, in addition to the character-building agencies in the community, insure, even in these challenging times, a measure of security for "the child in his community." If the welfare and security of America's children and youth are the most valuable contributions the parent-teacher association can make to the common defense today, we must bend every effort toward the enrichment of our program now, and formulate plans for future activities.

Mabel K. Raymond, Chairman
Programs and Founders Day

REFERENCES

1. The Child in His Community series, "Meeting Educational Needs," October *National Congress Bulletin.*

2. The Making of a Democracy. Gertrude Hartman. 1940. John Day Company. $1.96.

3. This Constitution of Ours. Judge Florence Allen. 1940. Putnam & Sons. $2.00.

4. Candle in the Dark. Irwin Edman. 1939. Viking Press. $1.25.

NATIONAL CONGRESS BROADCASTS

A SPECIAL Founders Day broadcast on Saturday, February 15, over the Columbia Network, was given by Mrs. William Kletzer, National Congress president.

Pointing out that the Founders met the problems of their day with wisdom and courage, Mrs. Kletzer went on to say that the problems which face us today call for the same high qualities of character.

"America has adopted a program of total defense," she said. "This, I trust, means defense of its democratic institutions, and not merely of its shore lines. In such a defense there is a part for every citizen to play, singly and together."

After enumerating various problems growing out of defense preparations, Mrs. Kletzer recommended to parent-teacher associations the following activities:

Cultivate in yourselves and your children a true appreciation of those qualities which go to make up the democratic way of life — tolerance, respect for the rights of others, willingness to accept responsibility for the common good.

Survey your communities as to health, housing, sanitation, recreation, education, and the other phases of family and group living to determine what essential services must be maintained and what extra provision must be made to meet defense conditions.

To meet these needs, mobilize the resources you possess, open up your schoolhouses and your churches, your libraries, and your community buildings to provide recreation centers. Enlist your leadership and your local talent to man these centers.

Provide opportunity for participation in community activities by the new families on all economic and social levels.

Assist in disseminating information on nutrition and consumer purchasing so that we may build a well-nourished, strong citizenry.

Emphasize the importance of appreciation of spiritual values.

Help America to be strong through the strength that comes from practicing her ideals. Help her prepare to defend democracy today and live democracy tomorrow. In so doing you hold on high the torch placed in your keeping by our Founders.

"Citizens All"

Topics for Discussion

Mar. 3—"Youth Needs Opportunity Now"
Mar. 10—"The Things Men Live For"
Mar. 17—"Is This a Land of Plenty?"
Mar. 24—"Safety: for What and from What?"
Mar. 31—"We, the Government"

Time — 6:00–6:15 P.M. E.S.T.
5:00–5:15 P.M. C.S.T.
4:00–4:15 P.M. M.S.T.
3:00–3:15 P.M. P.S.T.

Network — National Broadcasting Company.

(Rebroadcast on Tuesdays over Station WENR for Chicago area 4:30–4:45 C.S.T.)

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS FOR MARCH

SPEAKERS for the last four broadcasts of the 1941 Radio Forum will be as follows:

On March 10, William McKinley Robinson, National Congress chairman of Rural Service, and director of the Department of Rural Education, of the Western State Teachers College, Michigan, will be heard with Howard Y. McClusky, assistant director of the American Youth Commission of the American Council on Education.

On March 17, Mrs. Harry M. Mulberry, National Congress chairman of Reading and Library Service, will share the discussion with Senora Carmen Rodriguez, of Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico, who is a graduate student in the School of Social Service Administration at the University of Chicago.

On March 24, Marian Telford, National Congress chairman of Safety, and director of the Education Division, National Safety Council, will discuss safety problems with Sidney J. Williams, director Public Safety Division, National Safety Council.

The last of the thirteen-week broadcasts, on March 31, will be given by Mrs. William Kletzer, National Congress president, along with a speaker to be announced.

Substitutions in the programs for February included Dr. W. W. Bauer director, Bureau of Health Education, American Medical Association, who spoke in place of Dr. Lillian R. Smith, National Congress chairman of Health and Summer Round-Up; and Mrs. Kletzer, who took the place of J. W. Faust, National Congress chairman of Recreation.

The broadcast on February 24 originated in Atlantic City where the participants were in attendance at the meeting of the American Association of School Administrators.

Dean Ernest O. Melby, Dean of the School of Education of Northwestern University, is coordinator of the forum discussions.

FORUM RECORDINGS WIDELY USED

IN keeping with the policy of local units in adapting all National Congress programs to local conditions, a number of stations throughout the country are making recordings for rebroadcasting at more convenient times. The response from Congress groups evaluating the series has been generally enthusiastic. Comments such as the following are being received daily:

"Our Red Network here in Pittsburgh is recording the national program, and then rebroadcasts on Sunday afternoon at three o'clock, so the fathers can hear it too. The listening groups then meet during the week and discuss the broadcast."

"I want you to know how glad we are in Nebraska that we have been able to get the transcription of 'Citizens All,' over Station WOW Omaha, at 9:45 A.M. Sundays. We are giving widespread publicity, feeling that such a program makes a fine contribution to the work in the state."

"Have just listened in. Am very enthusiastic over the broadcasts and have written WRC in Washington expressing my appreciation of the rebroadcasting."

A *complete set* of the scripts may be secured by sending $1 to the National Broadcasting Company, Radio City, New York City. Single scripts, 10c each.

PARENT-TEACHER ACTIVITIES

FOR *Promoting Democracy* . . . BULLETIN No. 7

THE APPEAL TO REASON

OG SAT wearily by the fire in his cave. He was tired. His head ached; his gnarled right hand gently caressed the great lump on the top of his pate. Under his matted hair he could feel it, as big as a goose egg and marvelously sore.

He didn't feel in the least like a hero. He must be, though, for hadn't he been told so all afternoon? The first neighbors had come out of curiosity, for Og was not respected particularly for his physical prowess. Oh, yes, he was a good provider; he took good care of his family; he trained his children well in the love of the woods and the duties of the cave, but he was just a man among men. He'd live and die a good man, as men go; but certainly he couldn't be the chap that had outfought the Big-One. That just couldn't be. So the neighbors called, full of curiosity and hope of fun (fun at Og's expense, of course; for after all if he had got in the Big-One's way, that was just bad planning, and if he was alive to hear his neighbors' joshing he couldn't ask for more). As they passed the time of day and compared notes on the thing they had seen, others arrived, each adding his bit, and shortly the cave was full of shaggy shouting men. Certainly Og was a hero. For hadn't he actually done what all other men dreamed of doing?

OG'S ADVENTURE

IT had happened so quickly. For years everyone had hoped that justice would visit the Big-One, but that seemed unlikely. He was everything that common men hated. Cruel, cunning, strong and ruthless, he lived by his wits, as others lived by their labors. No one had found a way by which he could bring food directly into his cave without having some portion of it appropriated by the Big-One. He took what he wanted, and he wanted much.

Food had been scarce this spring, and the family had been on short rations in spite of all that Og could do. This morning he had got up before the sun, for he was too hungry to sleep, and the children whimpered restlessly. He might as well hunt, for then he would be busy, at least. As he came near the river he saw a fawn in the bushes along the trail, and by good luck he managed to catch it. Here was a stroke of fortune. Now the family could eat. Already he could taste the sweet marrow in the bones that came crisp out of the fire.

With a grunt he swung the fawn to his shoulder and turned toward the trail. He shifted his load to a comfortable position for the long pull up the steep hillside. He had it now; a step to the path and he'd be off. And, there, squarely across it, was the Big-One. Og knew what that meant: more hunger, children who whimpered, and more hunting. His fawn — his — would go to the cave of the man in front of him. What was the use? A fellow might as well fight it out some time. Of course he would lose everything, his fawn, perhaps even his life, but why live only to crawl away with his tail between his legs every time he saw this man?

Big-One was sure of himself. Hadn't he been the cock of this trail for these many years? And who was this Og anyway? By all rights he ought to drop the fawn and run for his life. Fight this time, would he? One good whack on the head and he'd see things in a different light! The Big-One started forward to demand his due. A few steps, a mighty spring, and his fist came down squarely on Og's head. Og staggered; the fawn slid limply from his shoulder and slithered into the leaves by the trail. With a grunt, as much as to say, "That'll fix you!" Big-One picked up the fawn, threw it over his shoulder, and turned on his heel.

OG MAKES USE OF THE FIRST WEAPON

OG was dazed and angry, even more than angry — just plain mad. Every nerve and fiber of him was tuned for action. Act he must, and did. Without thought of consequence he picked up a long straight limb that was close beside the trail, and with all his might he swung blindly. Come what would, he'd get in one good lick. The club stopped with a thick thud, and the man in front of him crumpled slowly at the knees, then pitched headlong across the trail. Again and again Og swung, until he became weak from his effort. Slowly his hand opened, and the club dropped to the ground beside the now-still form.

His fawn now, no question about that. With an effort he swung it slowly to his shoulder and set out for home.

BULLETIN TITLES

I. Introduction

1. What Price Democracy?
2. The P.T.A. — Its Unique Function in a Democracy

II. The Foundation Stones of Democracy

3. The Intrinsic Worth of the Individual
4. Equality
5. The Bill of Rights
6. Social Responsibility
7. The Appeal to Reason
8. The Consent of the Governed
9. Intelligent Citizens

A hero? Of course he was a hero. Hadn't justice been done and by his own hand? Hadn't he behaved as a caveman should, to the everlasting glory of his name? For out of deeds like this local legends are made. . . .

The curtain has been rung down on Og's personal drama for centuries, thousands of them — how many thousands we don't know, but enough to sense the slow, steady progress of men toward the appeal to reason. It rises now on a modern courtroom.

On a dais is the judge, a man of mature years, chosen for his legal knowledge and his ability to understand human stresses and strains. In a jury box on his left are twelve men and women selected from a panel of voters. For several days witnesses have been reciting various details of a case, and expert witnesses have given evidence dealing with the technical aspects of the controversy. The jury has heard this mass of material, and now it receives the case for decision. For hours or days it will discuss the evidence, call for additional information from the records, ask the judge for further instructions, and eventually bring in a verdict. In the light of that verdict the case will be settled. The case may be appealed by regular process to the highest tribunal; the decision may be reversed; but eventually it is settled, and if it is one which involves some new principle not before passed upon by a court, a precedent is set by which all cases of a like nature will be adjudicated in the future.

FROM CAVEMAN TO COURTROOM

IT is a far cry from the singlehanded personal settlement of Og's case to the elaborate procedure of the modern courtroom, yet that far cry represents the distance that men have traveled in their search for ways to settle disputes by appeal to reason. The layman sometimes feels that justice is not quickly and efficiently served by the elaborate machinery surrounding court procedure, but however much he doubts the form, he is not willing to revert to the law of the jungle to settle differences between individuals. On the contrary, the average man wants eagerly to find better ways to achieve justice for all with the least possible amount of "fuss and feathers." Modern trends prove that. Experiments are continually made to find ways to settle matters by the simplest and fairest means. Man wants justice, based on reason; so he tries various ways, and adopts permanently those which have the greatest social value.

Settlements of disputes by appeal to reason have not been simple and easy to achieve, and in disputes between nations we still resort to primitive ways. In spite of all his gadgets, modern man is constituted physically and emotionally very much as old Og was, and his reactions are very much the same. Fear or terror may cause him to run, anger may invite him to strike. Learned men can tell us in detail just what happens in our physical bodies under various emotional stimuli, but they cannot tell us how to avoid the usual reactions to those stimuli.

THE ABILITY TO REASON

THE great difference between us and Og lies not in our physical equipment, but in sheer ability to reason. Og was close to the dawn of man on this earth. We are heirs to the accumulated knowledge of all the generations since his time. That knowledge enables us to solve problems easily and quickly that Og couldn't even think of. We can control forces that he fled in fear, we can build and fashion, export, import, create, rebuild, tear down and build over again. There seems to be no limit to the things that we can make, and if suitable material does not exist, sometimes we can create it: create something new under the sun, something never existing in nature in that particular combination before. Research laboratories consider the solution of problems like that an everyday affair. Man right now knows enough to build a world that would be Utopia.

The catch in all this is that Og was our ancestor, his primitive emotions are still ours. We can't live up to the world that we can create. Human instincts get in our way. As a high school student puts it: "We do not take justice into our own hands — theoretically we have no right to take human life. But theories are worked out when we are cool and impersonal. When we are hysterical with fear and hatred, war suddenly becomes necessary and even noble. Our philosophy fails, and we act as if we were unreasoning brutes."

LACK OF REASON AT FAULT

LACK of reason always perverts the use of materials. Inventions that have immense potentialities for safer, more comfortable living are turned into instruments of death and destruction. The responsibility for that perversion is man's, and man's alone, for machines are creatures of his mind and hands, and destroy only at his bidding.

As an example of this, consider the club that Og used. It happened to be a natural product, not his creation; but had it been a club cleverly fashioned by him, the essential facts would not be different. It was inert material that in the natural course of events would return to the soil to furnish food for other plants. It might be used as fuel for the fire or as a part of the cave dwelling. It simply existed — material to be used as the person who had it cared to use it. Og chose to use it in a way that served his ends, and regardless of the justice of the particular occasion, he used it in a way that we believe is not socially useful.

So it is with our modern techniques and inventions. Every one of them was created originally so that men might live a better, more comfortable life. They have no more inherent power for good or evil than did Og's stick. It is the use man makes of them that is the final determinant of their social value. The Og in us turns our finest achievements into instruments of death as powerful in destruction as they are in construction. Always we must face the fact that it is man that perverts them, that no material thing can act of its own volition.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

IF we have been so long in finding ways to use reason to settle differences, what can be expected in the future?

The long way that man has had to travel to reach the point where even his individual quarrels can be settled according to rules, rather than by physical encounter, gives an inkling of future possibilities. Isn't it logical to suppose that nations will eventually find a way to decide their differences by appeal to reason rather than by resort to arms?

Will there not be a gradual evolution of ideas and plans to make this

a peaceful world in which reason prevails? This generation is familiar with some of the first experiments to do just that. The World Court, the League of Nations and its attendant Secretariat, were designed for that purpose. We thought the way had been found to assure peace and good will. But, sadly disillusioned, we know now just how mistaken we were. Does this present failure mean permanent failure? Does it mean that no way can be found to make this a peaceful world, to use appeal to reason instead of Og's brute methods?

Man makes progress slowly — perhaps today it seems that his evolution is slower than usual — for reason is a needed ingredient, and man learned to think just yesterday. There is still time to work on the problem of war. Scientists say the earth is two to three billion years old; that man has been on this earth about forty thousand years. About six thousand years ago man learned to record his acts. In that time we can trace, sketchily, his attempts to find better ways to live with his fellow men. We know only too well that the final answer isn't available yet. Six thousand years to come this far, and in the field of human justice we are still trying to find ways to attain some very simple concepts.

As individuals, we can envision the good life now and in some ways attain it; as social groups and as nations we have still a long way to go. It has taken thousands of years to get this far; it will take thousands more to achieve our ultimate desires.

Too late to do us much good, you say? Well, remember that you are enjoying right now liberty that you accept as commonplace simply because someone in the past struggled to gain it for all men. You can do your bit now in the stream of human progress to make better things come true for future generations. A useful life in a peaceful world justly governed seems unusually desirable just now. We *can* find ways to help along.

Not the least of these ways is the understanding and use of the appeal to reason.

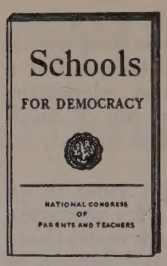
FOR YOUR DISCUSSION GROUP

The preamble to the Constitution of the United States is a statement of the purposes of that document. Obviously they are purposes based on reason.

1. In your discussion or study group decide as best you can what each of the purposes means. Determine how each applies to the individual, to the community, and to the state.
2. If the preamble is a statement of purposes that are guiding principles for some people, might it not be acceptable for all people? For your own thinking change the preamble just a bit — in the first line substitute "world" for "United States" and in the last line substitute "world" for "United States of America."
3. Does the preamble as it now stands apply to the world with the same force and effect as it does to the country? Do you suppose that most of the people in this world would like to live in a country which this preamble envisions?
4. Do the same human desires and needs which make us treasure and preserve democracy in America exist in the rest of the world?
5. Does any condition exist in the world today that did not exist in some degree in the colonies which first subscribed to the Constitution?
6. If the original states with their divergent views and interests could make this preamble and Constitution work, is there any reason why the countries of the world cannot put some such scheme into operation?
7. Would a world democracy be faced with any problems, racial, economic, social, etc., that do not exist in some degree under our functionary democracy?
8. Is the appeal to reason just as potent and just as needed in dealings between nations as it is in dealings between individuals?
9. Is there any worthwhile substitute for the appeal to reason?

LEARNING THE WAYS OF DEMOCRACY. The Educational Policies Commission, 1201 Sixteenth St., N. W., Washington, D. C. 1940. $1.00.

Since its establishment five years ago the Educational Policies Commission has made the improvement of education for democratic citizenship its central objective. *Learning the Ways of Democracy* will give parents and teachers a greater insight into what some schools are already doing in the field of citizenship education and what still needs to be done in many other American schools.



AN EXCELLENT SOURCE BOOK

Don't fail to add *Schools for Democracy* to your reference library. "It will come in handy many times!" The material in it is sound and factual. It is attractively bound in cloth and embossed in gold. The price is only 25c per copy.

RECOGNITION

FROM north, south, east, and west we are hearing that our associations are using the magazine extensively in programs devoted to civic education, citizenship, parent education, home-school cooperation. It is particularly helpful to groups that are conducting all-out educational forums on defense.

The February issue of *Current Concepts*, sponsored by the Board of Education of the City of New York, has abstracted two of our articles, *The Spiritual Significance of Family Life* and *Building a Curriculum Together.* (Have you read these articles?) It has also mentioned as very helpful, *What Shall We Wear?* and has reprinted *What Is Poetry?* and the questions used with the study-course article *All American.*

The *Education Digest* has selected two articles for presentation.

Other organizations have taken one thousand copies of the article *Unlicensed Teachers: Radio, Movies, and Press,* and seven hundred copies of *Opportunity for Spiritual Growth.*

Just recently the American Red Cross, the Association for Childhood Education, the American Legion, the American Youth Commission, the Extension Department of Kansas State College, and a number of other groups and universities have asked for copies of the *National Parent-Teacher* to include in their exhibits of materials helpful to those who are concerned with the welfare of children and youth.

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All of which goes to show that the National Parent-Teacher is being recognized widely as a valuable and practical publication.

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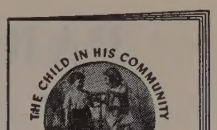
THE CHILD IN HIS COMMUNITY



Children in Migrant Families

● *"Study the conditions of migrant families and the causes that lead to their migration, with a view to supporting effective plans devised to meet their conditions and to prevent these unnecessary tragedies."*

— FROM THE CHILD IN HIS COMMUNITY

IN recent years one group of American children in whose welfare we should be interested has become more and more conspicuous. These children are the children in migrant agricultural families.

There are about one-third of a million families, or one million persons, crossing from state to state in search of work. Ten years ago "migrant labor" was thought of as made up of single men who worked during the wheat harvest throughout the West, and then spent the winters at home. The migrant family of today represents a different problem. It is the modern version of the pioneer covered-wagon family.

CHANGING CONDITIONS

The conditions in American agriculture have changed as a result of the soil wearing out, of the soil being carried away by erosion, and, in recent years, of the introduction of industrial agriculture. "Industrial agriculture" means large-scale farming. The development of cotton and fruit raising has brought about the need for large numbers of seasonal workers.

The farmer and his family who have been forced to move from their land believe there is opportunity for employment in these seasonal agricultural centers. They spend all their money to get there. Wages are low and the season does not last long. The family generally does not have a satisfactory diet. The children do not stay in one place long enough for school. The adults do not stay long enough to exercise their rights of citizenship. Housing conditions are unsatisfactory. Health conditions are often hazardous.

The Federal Government has assisted in many ways in meeting the various problems of migrant families. In 1936, Federal camps were first set up through the Farm Security Administration to take care of migrant workers and their families as they followed the crops. In these camps can be found an approach to normal community life. Shelter, sanitation, educational and recreational facilities, and a health clinic are available.

Since the problem of migrant families is not bounded by state lines, leadership should be taken by the Federal Government in trying to arrive at a solution. But shelter, education, health supervision, and medical care must be made available locally wherever and whenever needed.

Recommendations drawn up by the 1940 White House Conference on Children in a Democracy asked that the Federal Government accept responsibility for developing a plan to care for migrant families. Some of the general principles upon which it was suggested that such a plan be based are as follows:

1. Financial responsibility for migrants crossing *from state to state* should lie with the Federal Government. State and local governments should take financial and administrative responsibility for families that migrate *within state boundaries.* Since, however, groups of migrants often include both those who are only traveling within state borders, and those who are crossing state lines, Federal, state, and local governments should work out cooperative plans together.

2. Government employment services should take responsibility for the orderly guidance of migrant labor.

3. Plans for employment of migrant families should take into account the desire which many migrant families have to "resettle." For them, seasonal labor is only a makeshift.

4. Housing and sanitary regulations should be made applicable to the shelter of migratory and seasonal labor.

5. Long-range measures to prevent families from becoming migrants should be introduced in both agriculture and industry. In agriculture, these measures include the prevention of soil erosion and exhaustion, and helping farmers to meet difficulties of financing. In industry, they include measures to offset unemployment due to technical and economic changes.

We as parents and teachers may work toward the welfare of children in migrant families by:

Helping inform the general public regarding the causes of migration.

Working toward the development of plans which will put into action the Conference program outlined above.

Cooperating with local agencies in meeting the needs of migrant families in the community.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

Do you have a migrant problem in your community?

Do you have a local unit committee to study the problem?

Is there a trailer camp near your town?

Does your parent-teacher association cooperate with social agencies in solving the health problems of migrants?

Do you know that the Federal Surplus Commodities Corporation is supplying free hot lunches to nearly six million children this year? That this is double the number supplied last year? Does your association assist with the feeding of migrant children?

Have you given any thought to the provision of recreation centers for these children?

REFERENCES

1. *Children in a Democracy.* Report of the 1940 White House Conference.

2. Carey McWilliams. *Factories in the Field.*

3. Helen Heffernan. "The Least of These." *National Parent-Teacher,* February 1941.

NATIONAL CONGRESS BULLETIN

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PARENT-TEACHER PUBLICATIONS

The National Parent-Teacher Magazine

ARTICLES TO READ, TO STUDY, TO TALK ABOUT . . .

Foreign Ports. Louis Adamic's recent book, *From Many Lands,* is familiar to many of you. It is being widely acclaimed as one of the finest of the year. Since Mr. Adamic has done much to advance the cause of tolerance and American unity, we are very happy to announce that he has contributed an article to our March issue. *Foreign Ports* adds another high note to our list of excellent study-course articles.

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The Antidote for Comics. What we know as "escape" in reading is based upon the principle of identification. We become, in imagination, the characters about whom we read. Children "escape" too. Shall we allow them to identify themselves with the cheap, violent, antisocial heroes and villains of the action comics — or shall we provide more desirable literary models? Every parent in your community will welcome Sterling North's discussion of this problem.

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The New Baby. The advent of a new baby in a home where there is already a child calls for sympathetic understanding. Parents need to consider the adjustments which the older brother or sister must make. In this article Harold H. Anderson points out some of the ways in which the new baby may become a welcome member of the family.

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Four Stories by Robert P. Tristram Coffin. Our readers will be glad to hear that Mr. Coffin has written a series of four delightful stories for the *National Parent-Teacher.* The first story, *The Delectable Voyage,* appears in the March issue. It is about young Peter Winship and his first boat. The series might well be called *A Boy Grows Up.* The author's sensitive understanding of children will find a warm response in the hearts of all parents who read these articles.

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The editorial in the March issue is by Harriet Elliott, Consumer Commissioner on the National Defense Advisory Commission.

Officers and directors of the *National Parent-Teacher* who attended the annual meeting of the Magazine Company. Left to right, *standing:* Howard V. Funk, Mrs. James K. Lytle, Mrs. M. D. Wilkinson, Mrs. James Fitts Hill, Mrs. John E. Hayes. *Seated:* Mrs. C. H. Turner, Mrs. R. H. Jesse, Mrs. Frederick M. Hosmer, Mrs. William Kletzer, Mrs. Wm. A. Hastings. The officers and directors serve in an unsalaried capacity. They welcome your comments and suggestions and they are tremendously encouraged when they know that you are using and promoting the *National Parent-Teacher.*

TIME FOR ANOTHER CHECK-UP

- **Have you given the Promotion Packet of magazine material to your magazine chairman?**
- **Have you talked about the magazine to the members of your executive committee?**
- **Have you and the members of your executive committee made plans to promote the magazine?**
- **Have you given your school principal the circular enclosed in the recent letter sent out by Mrs. James Fitts Hill, president of National Parent-Teacher, Inc.?**
- **Does your magazine chairman see this page each month?**
- **Do you share the *Bulletin* with other officers and chairmen?**
- **Have you done your very best to make it possible for *your state president* to report a gain in *National Parent-Teacher* magazine subscriptions at the National Convention in Boston?**

WHY ARE hundreds of parent-associations taking ten, twenty, thirty, and forty subscriptions? Because they are definitely sold on the value of the *National Parent-Teacher.* Because they have learned from experience that those who read the magazine regularly take a more active interest in parent-teacher work.

IF YOUR association is one that has never taken the *National Parent-Teacher* can you not find a way to place at least one subscription in circulation in your group between now and March 31?